

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 CAIRO 01224 121316Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 4141
INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
WHITEHOUSE WASH DC IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T CAIRO 01224

EXDIS (HANDLE AS NODIS)

WHITE HOUSE FOR DR. BRZEZINSKI

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, EG, IS, US
SUBJECT: AGENDA: NEXT STEPS

REF: (A) STATE 8304, (B) TEL AVIV 479, (C) CAIRO 1126

1. FACT THAT WE UNABLE REACH AGREEMENT WITH PRIMIN BEGIN ABOUT OUR GENERALLY NEUTRAL AGENDA PROPOSAL UNDERSCORES VIRTUAL IMPOSSIBILITY THAT EGYPTIANS AND ISRAELIS COULD WORK OUT MUTUALLY AGREEABLE AGENDA BY THEMSELVES. IT WILL REQUIRE OUR CONTINUING INTERVENTION WITH BOTH IF SOME KIND OF AN ACCEPTABLE AGENDA DOCUMENT IS TO BE ARRIVED AT PRIOR TO THE CONVENING OF THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE MEETING. BEGIN'S COMPLAINT THAT WE DEVIATED FROM PRECISE LANGUAGE OF U.S./ISRAELI WORKING PAPER ALSO UNDERSCORES THE PROBLEM WE FACE. SADAT IS TALKING ABOUT AND HOPING FOR NEW ISRAELI AREA PERCEPTIONS FOLLOWING HIS TRIP TO JERUSALEM; BEGIN SEEMS TO BE STICKING TO SAME PROCEDURAL POINTS THAT BLOCKED PROGRESS IN OCTOBER/NOVEMBER OF LAST YEAR.

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2. SADAT EXPECTED ISRAELI OBJECTION TO OUR PROPOSED AGENDA. STRICTLY SPEAKING, SINCE BEGIN HAS TURNED IT DOWN, SADAT IS NO LONGER UNDER ANY OBLIGATION TO ACCEPT IT. QUESTION OF A SIMPLIFIED REFORMULATION WILL, THEREFORE, BE A NEW ONE. THIS TIME HE WILL PROBABLY WANT TO TAKE SOME COUNSEL FROM HIS PRINCIPAL ADVISERS.

3. SADAT WOULD LIKE ADVANCE AGREEMENT ON AN AGENDA IF THIS COULD BE OBTAINED. I BELIEVE A SIMPLIFIED REFORMULATION MIGHT BE TRIED OUT ON HIM. IN ORDER TO BE ACCEPTABLE, HOWEVER, HAVING IN MIND HIS PUBLIC AND ARAB IMAGE, IT WOULD HAVE TO MAKE ADEQUATE REFERENCE TO THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION.

4. ON POINT A OF REVISION WHICH AMBASSADOR LEWIS PROPOSES, SADAT WILL NOT BE HAPPY WITH DELETION OF SPECIFICS. HE WOULD PROBABLY AGREE TO THE PHRASE "A COMPREHENSIVE PEACE SETTLEMENT." REVISED POINT B IS, AS REF A POINTS OUT, SO BLAND THAT IT MEANS NOTHING. SADAT WOULD PROBABLY WANT SOME REFERENCE TO THE PALESTINIANS IN THE WEST BANK AND GAZA. HE WOULD NOT ACCEPT THE ISRAELI FORMULATION OF JUDEA AND SAMARIA.

5. IN TRYING SELL SUCH A REFORMULATION TO SADAT, WE WOULD HAVE TO GIVE SADAT AN ASSURANCE THAT ALL THE SPECIFIC ITEMS WHICH REFORMULATION EXCLUDES ARE PROPER SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION AT JERUSALEM POLITICAL COMMITTEE SESSIONS AND THAT WE WILL SUPPORT EGYPTIANS ON THIS POINT IF ISRAELIS BALK. OTHER POINTS THAT I MADE TO SADAT YESTERDAY, SUCH AS NEED FOR DETAILED EGYPTIAN PLAN FOR WEST BANK/GAZA, ARE STILL APPLICABLE EVEN UNDER PROPOSED AGENDA REFORMULATION.

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6. AMBASSADOR LEWIS IN BEST POSITION DETERMINE OPTIMUM TACTICS IN HANDLING MATTER WITH BEGIN. IN CASE OF SADAT, I THINK IT ADVISABLE GET WORD TO HIM ASAP THAT BEGIN HAS BALKED ON OUR PROPOSED AGENDA AND WE ARE NOW CONSIDERING A REFORMULATION WHICH HOPEFULLY WOULD BE SUFFICIENTLY SIMPLIFIED TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH SIDES. THEREAFTER, ONCE BEGIN HAS AGREED ON REFORMULATION, I WILL TRY TO CONTACT SADAT EITHER IN ASWAN OR HERE TO DISCUSS MATTER WITH HIM. IT WILL BE MORE DIFFICULT THIS TIME SINCE SADAT'S SENIOR OFFICIALS KNOW ABOUT OUR PROPOSED AGENDA, ARE NOT HAPPY ABOUT IT AND WILL WANT SOME VOICE IN FUTURE DISCUSSIONS OF SUBJECT. EILTS

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